



Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Council – 28 September 2017

Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales (Questions 38-40) – Consultation Response

Purpose:	To provide a response to the Welsh Government consultation on Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales by 10 October 2017.
Policy Framework:	None.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal, Political Group Leaders & Deputies.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The response to the Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales be made as outlined in Appendix A of the report.
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1. Introduction

1.1 The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government has launched a consultation document on Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales. The relevant provisions of the Wales Act 2017 on electoral and registration matters are due to come into force in 2018. The consultation relates to:

- How democracy works in Wales;
- How people become eligible to vote;
- How they exercise their right to vote;
- How elections are organised.

1.2 The consultation period closes on 10 October 2017.

1.3 This report sets out the proposed responses of the relevant Officers for Council to consider. The proposed responses were circulated to the Political Group Leaders and their Deputies on 23 August 2017 for their consideration. They are set out in **Appendix A** of this report.

1.4 The Welsh Government Consultation document may be viewed at <https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/electoral-reform-local-government-wales>

2. Consultation Questions & Responses

2.1 There are 46 consultation questions in all; however, this report only considers questions 38, 39 and 40. The other questions are considered in a separate Council report.

2.2 Some consultation questions can be considered political and as such, may not be responded to as a consensus response could not be achieved.

2.3 Should individual Councillors or Political Groups wish to respond directly to the consultation then they may do so via the above web link.

2.4 The Chief Executive, Head of Democratic Services and Electoral Services Team Leader met with the Political Group Leader and their Deputies on 14 September 2017 in order to discuss the Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales consultation document.

2.5 The Political Group Leaders and Deputies were asked to consider the responses and to feedback to the Head of Democratic Services by 27 September 2017, in order to allow their views to be collated prior to the Council meeting.

3. Equality and Engagement Implications

3.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening process took place prior to the consultation period. The outcome indicated that it was low priority and a full report was not required.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix A	Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales – Consultation Response
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Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales - Consultation Response

Question	Proposed Response / Notes
<p>38 Do you agree that the statutory chief executive role should include that of the RO?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>39 Do you agree that any addition to salary in recognition of RO duties should be a matter for the Local authority to determine?</p>	<p>A RO should not receive additional salary in relation to Local Government elections (including Community / Town Council elections); however, the RO should continue to receive the additional salary in relation to all other elections (NAW, Parliamentary, European, PCC etc. and referenda. These payments are set in statute by constituency prior to each election / referendum and are paid by Government in order to reflect added responsibility. Failure in this area has seen RO's being dismissed. They should therefore be paid appropriately for the risk of the work which they undertake.</p> <p>Please note that the RO for Swansea does not receive any additional payments for Local Government elections.</p>
<p>40 Should WG move to a system of calculating Assembly election costs on an agreed formula, based on the size of electorate?</p>	<p>Yes. However, the final cost paid should be based on the Electorate on Polling Day. This could be hugely different to the one in place at the Notice of Election. With regard to the recent Parliamentary Election the difference between the two electorates was approximately 7,000 electors.</p>